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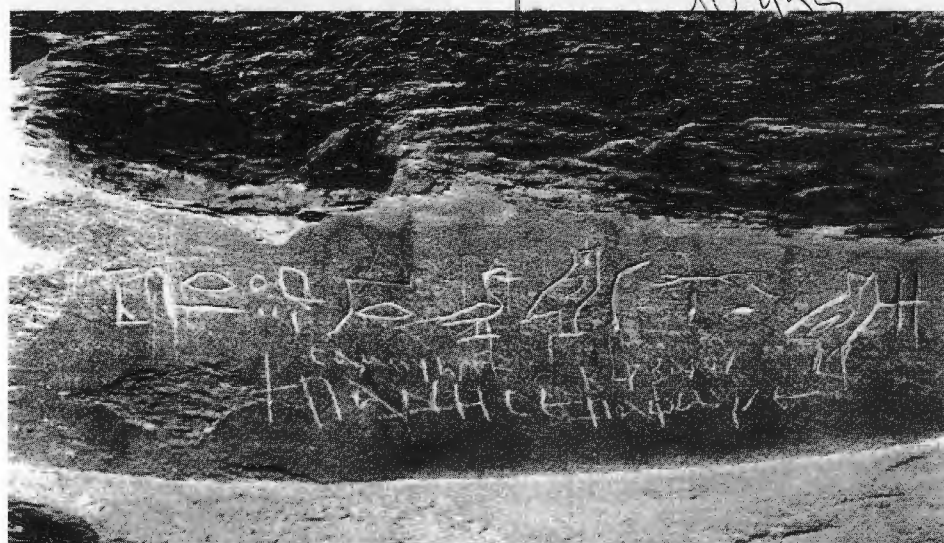
THE THEBAN DESERT ROAD SURVEY

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Of the many distinctive physical characteristics of the land of Egypt, the contrast between desert and cultivation is perhaps the most striking. This geographical feature is especially evident from the air, even at night. Flying into Cairo from the north, one sees a faint sprinkling of lights, fading just beyond the coastline of the Mediterranean. The stark absence of artificial illumination marks the edge of the Eastern Sahara, a vast arid zone stretching almost endlessly south and west.

The ancient Egyptians took note of this stark contrast between the desert and the sown. They viewed their world as a series of balanced pairs: Upper and Lower Egypt, cultivation and desert, order and chaos. The exis-



GRAFFITI AT GEBEL TJAUTI: "THE <POLICE> CHIEF AAM'S SON, THE OVERSEER OF COPPER WORKERS, RENSENEB," WITH COPTIC BELOW.

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tence of balanced pairs indicated completed creation; thus deities from the time before the final perfection of the world are often androgynous—they are from a time before the separation of the sexes, the male and female pairs in which fully formed life exists. In this cosmos of pairs, the cultivation is Egypt, the land of men and Horus; the desert, the red land, is the land of foreigners and Seth, the god of confusion. Because of the often emphasized religious associations of the desert, and the Egyptians' well-known love for their Nile Valley home, many have thought they eschewed and even feared the desert. Others have mistakenly believed that the Nile was always the exclusive thoroughfare for Egypt, obviating the

need for travel through the desert, except under duress for journeys to mining areas and the oases. These ideas, and the wealth of material within the Nile Valley, have conspired to leave the desert fringes of Egypt at the fringes of Egyptology.

The caravan routes upon which the ancient Egyptians traveled from the Theban area of the Nile Valley into the great Western Desert first captured our imagination more than seven years ago. Stationed in Luxor for six months each year as Egyptologists with the Epigraphic Survey, we would often look westward, across the Nile, past the lush fields and beyond the tombs and

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

MISTRESS OF THE HOUSE, MISTRESS OF HEAVEN: WOMEN IN ANCIENT EGYPT

From 21 February to 18 May, 1997, the Brooklyn Museum of Art will be the second and final venue for *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*, an exhibition organized by the Cincinnati Art Museum under the direction of Guest Curator Anne Capel and Glenn Markoe, Curator of Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Art. The exhibition is made up of over 250 objects from 26 institutional and private American lenders that range in date from the Predynastic Period to the Ptolemaic Period and include statuary, reliefs and paintings as well as examples of the so-called minor arts in a variety of media such as gold, silver, bronze, glass, faience, ivory, wood, stone and terracotta.

As Anne Capel explained in an article on the exhibition in *KMT* 7 (Winter, 1996-97), pp. 35-42, the exhibition includes works of great beauty, but "each object considered for inclusion was evaluated for the potential information which it could impart to the exhibition visitor concerning the occupations and preoccupations of ancient Egyptian women" (p. 37). In the same article, she explains that one reason for developing the exhibition was the timeliness of its topic. Indeed, the exhibition is a logical outgrowth of the feminist movement and the rise in the significance of women's studies in Egyptology and other disciplines during the last few decades.

While the subject of women in ancient Egypt was not completely absent from earlier Egyptological studies, its treatment was quite limit-



FIG. 1. HEAD OF A QUEEN OR PRINCESS AS A SPHINX, FOUND NEAR ROME. MIDDLE KINGDOM, MID-DYNASTY 12. BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART 56.85, CHARLES EDWIN WILBOUR FUND.

ed. As Gay Robins observed in the introduction to her book *Women in Ancient Egypt* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1993), p. 16, given the fact that ancient Egypt was almost always ruled by a king governing through a male bureaucracy, it is hardly surprising that the study of ancient Egypt, by scholars in countries where public life was also male-dominated, had been primarily concerned with the male norm.

The 1960s witnessed a growth in the number of publications relating to women in ancient Egypt, including two general treatments of the subject: Jean Vercoutter's "La femme en Egypte ancienne" in P. Grimal, ed., *Histoire mondiale de la femme* (Paris, 1965); and Steffen Wenig's *Die Frau im Alten Aegypten* (Leipzig, 1967). The 1970s, 1980s and 1990s have seen an increasing number of Egyptological articles, dissertations and monographs devoted to various

aspects of the subject, of which even a selective list would be too lengthy to include here. However, the two catalogues written for *Nofret - Die Schöne. Die Frau in Alten Aegypten*, a special loan exhibition from Cairo, must be noted because to the best of this writer's knowledge, this was the first major special loan exhibition on the subject. *Nofret* was first mounted in Munich, Berlin and Hildesheim before traveling to other European venues. In Hildesheim, a supplemental exhibition of objects from other museums was shown concurrently with *Nofret*, and had its own catalogue subtitled "Wahrheit" und Wirklichkeit.

Now, in the later 1990s, ancient Egyptian women have become a significant theme in the American museum world, beginning with 1995's *Reflections of Women in the New Kingdom: Ancient Egyptian Art from The British Museum*. ARCE members who attended the annual meeting in Atlanta that year had the opportunity to view it at Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum, its only venue. It was followed by *Queen Nefertiti and the Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*, an important exhibition on women in a specific part of the New Kingdom on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art from 8 October, 1996 to 16 March 1997. With the overlap in dates between this exhibition and *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*, New York residents and visitors will have an opportunity to view two complementary exhibitions. And finally, participants in this year's ARCE meeting

in Ann Arbor will be able to see the special exhibition *Women and Gender in Ancient Egypt: From Prehistory to Late Antiquity*, which will be on view at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology 14 March - 15 June. This exhibition is made up of objects from the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology of the University of Michigan and the Papyrology collection of the University of Michigan Library.

Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt also fits into the broader context of recent exhibitions on women in other areas of the ancient world. While it is the first major traveling exhibition in the United States to deal with Egyptian women during the broad span of pharaonic history, it follows *Pandora's Box: Women in Classical Greece*, a major traveling exhibition organized by the Walters Art Gallery and shown in Baltimore, Dallas and Basel between November, 1995 and June 1996. And it overlaps with the exhibition *I Claudia. Women in Ancient Rome*, organized by the Yale University Art Gallery and scheduled for New Haven, San Antonio and Raleigh between September 1996 and June 1997.

Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt was originally intended to be shown only at the Cincinnati Art Museum. It was not until work on the exhibition was well advanced that the Brooklyn Museum of Art became involved, at its own request, as a second venue. This involvement led to Brooklyn curators James Romano, Donald Spaul and the present writer contributing entries for a number of the catalogue objects and suggesting a few objects be added to the exhibition. The bulk of the entries, however, were written by Anne Capel and Glenn Markoe, with David Silverman (University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology) contributing one entry. The catalogue also includes essays by Betsy

Bryan (Johns Hopkins University), Janet Johnson (Oriental Institute, University of Chicago) and Catharine Roehrig (Metropolitan Museum of Art).

As explained by Anne Capel in her *KMT* article (p. 37), the exhibition was organized around four major themes to permit it to represent the broad range of the feminine in Egyptian civilization: Private and Public Lives, Female Royalty, Goddesses, and Women in the Afterlife. While the same basic arrangement has been followed for the Brooklyn installation, the exhibition here includes an additional ten objects from Brooklyn's own collection and expanded labels and didactic panels. The writer acknowledges gratefully the assistance of Paul O'Rourke, Research Associate in the department of Egyptian, Classical and Ancient Middle Eastern Art in writing some of this material, which is occasionally paraphrased below.

The most significant change from the Cincinnati venue is the addition of an introductory gallery in which four Brooklyn objects and accompanying wall panels introduce the four main themes of the exhibition. The painting of the Lady Tjepu, part of the Cincinnati exhibition, was chosen to represent "women in the afterlife" and moved to the introductory gallery because Tjepu has come to represent the exhibition for the Brooklyn venue. The other introductory objects are part of the exhibition for the Brooklyn venue only. The pair statue of Nebet-ta and Nebsen, the former a "Mistress of the House" and "Songstress of Isis" represents "public and private lives." "Female royalty" is represented by a royal female head recently reattributed from the Middle Kingdom to Dynasty XVIII by Biri Fay (article forthcoming) and "goddesses" by a New Kingdom relief of Mut that includes the title "Mistress of Heaven." The remainder of this article will summarize the major



FIG. 2. RELIEF OF FEMALE ATTENDANTS CLAPPING HANDS, FROM THE TOMB OF QUEEN NEFRU AT THEBES. MIDDLE KINGDOM, DYNASTY 11. ANONYMOUS LENDER.

themes of the exhibition and some of the objects illustrating them.

PRIVATE LIVES

Our knowledge of ancient Egyptian society is still sketchy, and comes mainly from the monuments of the elite, most of which were made by and for men. Hence, what we know of the status even of well-to-do women is limited. Most women were wives, mothers and household managers, and were referred to by generic titles such as "Citizeness" or "Mistress of the House." The latter title could mean more than simply housewife when the house to be managed was a mansion or an estate.

Women in Egypt enjoyed rights that have been denied to women in many other societies (e.g., the right to acquire, own and dispose of real estate and other property) although Egypt was almost always ruled by kings and administered by an essentially male bureaucracy. Indeed, Egyptian women had the same formal legal status as men. Even if the occupations open to women were limited, some did exist. Women who were wealthy or influential enough could commission monuments for themselves or relatives, such as stelae

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

ANTIQUITIES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REPORT

The following is a summary of activities of the ADP during the fall season. A complete account will be available at ARCE's Annual Meeting in April.

MONASTERY OF ST. ANTHONY

A team of four conservators arrived in Cairo on Nov. 7, starting work on the mural paintings in the church on Nov. 11 and continuing until Dec. 21, 1996. The north wall of the nave of the church was cleaned, including the return walls and undersides of two archways leading from the narthex end and to the khurus. Thirty percent of the interior wall area of the church was completed instead of the 22% planned for this campaign. The cleaning process removed the accumulated dirt and several layers of disfiguring over-painting from the figures, thus uncovering the original designs and colors. The paintings have probably not been seen in their cleaned condition for at least 400 years, possibly longer. Many new details have emerged in the course of the work, such as the first clear examples of earlier paintings under the 13th century



RESTORATION WORK. PHOTO: CHIP VINCENT

figures. The work of the two schools of painters, Coptic and Byzantine, represented in the church is also becoming strikingly apparent.

Photography was done of the conservation work in progress in the church. A complete photo-documentation of the cleaned section of the church and all the icons and objects of historical significance in

the Monastery is underway. A Coptologist will write the art historical and iconographical study of the paintings; a preliminary site visit is planned for March.

The Monastery has generously supported the project with accommodations provided by refurbishing a disused building inside the Monastery, which has been converted into a fully equipped and self contained residence for the conservation team and up to four overnight visitors. Fr. Maximos has supervised and implemented this important contribution to the work.

MONASTERY OF ST. PAUL

A start has been made with photographic documentation. The Monastery requested and we agreed to supply them with a duplicate set of 35mm color slides for the Monastery archive.

St. Paul's Monastery was included in the Oct 12-13 trip of Vincent



PHOTO BY TERRY WALZ

Battle, Thomas Dailey, Munir Na'matullah and Mona Shafa'.

TOMB OF SETI I

Candidates were interviewed in October for the Egyptological study of the Tomb. Dr. Bojana Mojsov was selected and is now at work on this part of the project.

In September William Remsen and Michael Jones installed humidity and temperature monitors inside the tomb at three strategic points: in Room K (burial chamber), Room F and in Corridor A, just inside the entrance. These points were selected to provide a cross-section of the relative conditions from the lowest to the highest parts of the tomb. The new work of the SCA may not be to prepare the tomb for re-opening to the public. The structural problems, conservation needs and appropriate ways to display the tomb require careful handling, which is why the studies proposed by the ADP Seti I sub-project are needed before anything is done. If the tomb is opened to tourists without the proper attention to details its problems will get worse. Nevertheless we shall continue to make the necessary plans for the project. There is much that can be done from the doc-



PHOTO BY CHIP VINCENT



TOMB OF SETI I: FIGURE OF SETI ON SLEDGE. PHOTO: DAVID MOYER

umentation available, therefore work already started will continue and plans laid for other facets of the project.

QUSEIR FORT

Applications from architects to design the Visitors' Center have been received and a candidate provisionally selected. The archaeologist has also been identified to conduct controlled test excavation and monitor clearing operations. We are now waiting SCA approvals. The surveyor and restorers are under consideration.

A full photo-documentation in color slides and black and white of the Fort in its present condition was done in November and December and is now complete. The photographer was at the site for this work during the recent exceptionally heavy rains and subsequent flooding. The Fort suffered some structural damage during the rains, the most serious of which was the collapse of a roof in the rooms of the eastern wall. The Fort was photographed before and after the rains. The experience of the rains was useful in that it illustrated in a practical way the parts of the structure most in danger from storms of this kind.



THE AMERICAN DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT EGYPT ESSAYS

NANCY THOMAS, EDITOR

Essays by James P. Allen, Dorothea Arnold, Lanny Bell, Robert S. Bianchi, Edward Brovarski, Richard A. Fazzini, Timothy Kendall, Peter Lacovara, David O'Connor and Kent R. Weeks. Companion volume to the exhibition catalog.

For your copy of **ESSAYS**, send a check for \$48.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling to:

ARCE, 30 East 20th Street, Suite 401, New York, NY 10003

THIS AND THAT

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

At the last Executive Committee meeting (November 1996, Providence), Gerald L. Vincent has been appointed Chief Financial Officer. He will be responsible for coordinating all financial reporting and operations of the Center, both New York and Cairo. He succeeds Hilda Polanco in this position. Hilda will continue to be responsible for overall ARCE accounts.

NEW APPOINTMENTS AT THE ARCE OFFICE

Peter Zibielskis has been working in the office this semester as an office assistant. Peter is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at New York University and will shortly be leaving for Malaysia to carry out his dissertation research.

The New York office has also benefited from the assistance of Christopher Bell, who is working on his master's at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at NYU. Chris has been working on the annual report.

AMIRA KHATTAB'S U.S. VISIT

Our deepest gratitude to all who made contributions to bring Amira Khattab to the U. S. to visit her many friends as a gift for her 30 years of service. Her itinerary for the month of April: 2-7, New York; 7-10, Philadelphia; 10-13, Ann Arbor; 13-16, Chicago; 16-18, Memphis; 18-20, Los Angeles; 20-25, San Francisco; 25-30, Washington, DC; April 30-May 1, Boston. If you would like to make an appointment or attend an event in her honor, please contact ARCE New York.

NEW CONSORTIUM MEMBER

Georgia State University has joined the ARCE consortium as an

Institutional Member. The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences is Dr. Ahmed Abdelal.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS 1996-97

Erika Altenkirche (Germany) and William Remsen (Wellesley, MA). Life Membership is a one-time payment (which may also be spread over three years), and gives you all the benefits of regular membership, including special discounts and books.

CAIRO CONFERENCES AT THE CENTER

ARCE is hosting two conferences during the month of March: The Social Science Research Council is holding its annual regional conference in Cairo March 16-20; and the American Library Association is holding a special Middle East Librarians conference, March 10-15.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS NEWS

Nancy Thomas has been appointed Co-Curatorial Chair, Los Angeles Museum of Art, a position that has museum-wide responsibilities. She has just finished a major new exhibition, the *Art of the Shumei Family*.

FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

This being 1997, ARCE is celebrating the fortieth year of its now well established Fellowship Program, which over the years has helped more than 400 scholars carry out research in Egypt. The program, originally funded by the Bolligen Foundation in 1957 to sponsor the work of John A. Williams and Helen Gordon Jacquet, is now supported by grants from the United States Information Agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation,

and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS DONATION

ARCE has received an anonymous gift to ensure the publication of Bernard V. Bothmer's "Egyptian Diary, 1950." The diary records Prof. Bothmer's first trip to Egypt, at the behest of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in whose Egyptian Section he was then employed.


OTHER SPECIAL DONATIONS

The Materials for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and New York City Department of Sanitation has donated office supplies, including a typewriter, and three chairs to the New York office. The organization is grateful for the support it has received from this group, which has allowed us to furnish the new room made available for the new Deputy Director of New York Operations.

YEAR END APPEAL WRAP-UP

This year's Year End Appeal netted approximately \$18,000. About \$14,000 was donated by members of the Board; the remaining \$4,175 was given by the regular membership.

Publications	380
Fellowships	
(ancient modern studies)	1,600
Public Programs.	215
General Endowment	1,870
Library Fund	110

Among Board members, special thanks need to be expressed to Jack Josephson, who spearheaded the Board drive this year, and to Barbara Mertz, Bruce Mainwaring, Sameh Iskandar, Ben Harer, Charles Herzer, Gerald Vincent, David Silverman, Adina Savin, Elizabeth Fernea, Charles Smith, and Janet Johnson and Donald Whitcomb. 

Terry Walz

EVENTS AROUND ARCE

The following listing is meant to convey the flavor of the varied and interesting activities that are taking place in Cairo and around the United States in ARCE chapters. It is not exhaustive and not detailed. For more precise information and to keep up with the chapter near you, check the ARCE Web site at <http://www.arce.org>.

NEW YORK

Mark Easton, Cairo director, kicked off the spring public programs schedule on January 8 with an update on the Egyptian Antiquities Project's work in Cairo and the work of the Antiquities Development Fund at Quesir Fort, the tomb of Seti I and the monasteries of St. Paul and St. Anthony. On February 5, Alaa El-Habashi lectured on the work of the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arab in Cairo and its impact on the city and its monuments. The end of February and the beginning of March were packed with activity: the Egyptian Film Festival in Philadelphia (described in detail in a forthcoming issue of the Newsletter), the seminar on "Cosmos and Chaos" put on with the Westchester chapter of the AIA, and a screening of a film about the legendary Umm Kulthum in collaboration with the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at New York University.

WASHINGTON

Francis Niedenfuhr led the Washington chapter on a one-day outing to New York on Sunday, January 26. Forty-seven members toured the Nefertiti exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art with the expert assistance of Elena

Pischikova. After lunch they heard a thought-provoking lecture on Amarna art by Edna R. Russmann.

NORTH TEXAS

Activities in March feature a lecture by Ann Macy Roth entitled *Feminist Egyptology: Ancient Egyptian Women in Myth and Archaeology*. On March 15, Dr. Roth will lead the annual seminar devoted this year to *Liberated Women? Understanding Gender Roles in Ancient Egypt*. April and June lecturers will be Peter Lacovara (*City Life Along the Nile*) and Gay Robins (*The Power of Doorways: Liminality in Ancient Egypt*) respectively.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

On March 31 at 7:00 p.m. at UCLA, Dominic Montserrat from the University of Warwick will talk about his latest book *Sex and Society in Roman Egypt*. On May 10 at 5:00 p.m., Emily Teeter will be ARCE's guest at a lecture/dinner event. The topic of her lecture will be *Popular Religion in Ancient Egypt: The New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period*.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The northern California chapter holiday party was a night in Egypt with Egyptian food and dress and Egyptian items raffled off as door prizes. A good time as had by all. In February, the first exhibition of Egyptian products was held in San Francisco. "The Egyptian Marketplace in San Francisco," from February 10 to 13, included on the program local chapter member Carol Redmount addressing the group on the topic of her recent excavations in the Eastern Delta.


ARIZONA

The Arizona chapter's latest chapter activity held on March 9 at the University of Arizona, Tucson. Cathleen Keller of the University of California, Berkeley, will be speaking on *A Family Affair: The Decoration of Theban Tomb 359 at Deir el-Medina*.

CAIRO

The very active seminar schedule in Cairo includes the following lectures. Lyla Pinch Brock, Canadian Institute in Egypt on (*The Final Chapters*) on the 12th; Mark Lehner on March 19, on his work at Giza, and Lorraine Chittock, Author and Photographer of *Shadows in the Sand, Following the Forty Days Road*, speaking on March 26 on *Desert Crossing*.

ANNUAL MEETING

If it's springtime it must be the ARCE annual meeting. Ann Arbor will be the direction of ARCE members from all the United States and from Cairo as they convene from April 11 to 13 to share ideas and good times. One of our hosts, the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, will feature an exhibition *Women and Gender in Ancient Egypt*. From Prehistory to Late Antiquity as well as the reinstallation of their permanent Egyptian collection. The keynote speaker this year will be Ann Radwan, executive director of the Binational Fulbright Commission; she will speak on the intellectual and political environment of research in Egypt at this time. Another feature of this year's meeting will be the feting of Amira Khattab to thank her for 30 years of service to ARCE. What better reason to make the trip to Ann Arbor! 

Elaine Schapker

MISTRESS OF THE HOUSE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

and statues to help insure their immortality.

Unlike marriage in modern society, marriage in ancient Egypt was a completely private matter, with no legal or religious ceremony. Basically an agreement made by two people and their families to create an economic and procreative union, marriages were often enduring and loving relationships and usually monogamous. The dowry the wife brought, if there was one, was her property, as were any gifts that a husband gave to his wife. Beyond the idea of private property, the Egyptians had developed the notion of "joint property," acquired during a marriage.

One of the basic purposes of marriage in ancient Egypt was procreation, and children of both sexes were desired and beloved members of the nuclear family. Numerous representations of family groups from as early as the Old Kingdom include one or more children, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's group statue of grandparents and a granddaughter.

These ideas and others are illustrated in the exhibition, in part, by representations of individuals, such as a little-known but important statue of a woman from the Philadelphia Museum of Art that may be the same woman shown in the well-known pair statue of Memy-Sabu (or Memy and Sabu) from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, also in the exhibition.

Because childbearing and child-rearing could be fraught with danger, particularly for the woman, various forms of protection were sought to protect women and children from harm. One of the deities most associated with childbirth was the god Bes, represented in the exhibition by amulets and by a splendid faience vessel from the Virginia Museum of

Fine Arts (Richmond). Also included are fine examples of various types of "fertility figures" and several feminoform vessels, including a fine "Taweret inspired(?)" alabaster piece from the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago. Such objects are normally related to beliefs and practices connected with conception, pregnancy and childbirth.

Displays of items relating to personal adornment link the treatments of "Private Lives" and "Public Lives." Both men and women in ancient Egypt, especially of the upper classes, devoted time and attention to personal care and adornment. They used cosmetics to enhance their appearance, and various ointments and perfumes. Both men and women wore wigs or hairpieces on public occasions and decked themselves with jewelry ranging from simple pieces made of stone, shell or faience to elaborate creations in gold and other precious metals. Many of the examples of jewelry in the exhibition are drawn from the Cincinnati Art Museum's collection.

PUBLIC LIVES

There was a clear distinction between the occupations of men and women in ancient Egyptian society. For the most part, the state and the temple complexes were administered by an all-male bureaucracy.

Women often held positions connected with weaving, wig-making, tenant landholding and funerary cults. Some of their titles connect them with temple cults, usually in the capacities of music makers and dancers. They also served as musician entertainers outside of the religious sphere, many working in the service of the king. A relief from the Cleveland Museum of Art shows a group of female musicians. Many of the positions that women held were in the service of other women, particularly members of the royalty and nobility. A few female titles clearly indicate that women sometimes held

administrative positions, but the overall picture is one that shows women absent for the most part from the administration.

It is evident that many of the occupations that women held outside of the home are an extension of domestic activity: beer- and bread-making, other food-preparation, and weaving. The latter occupation was an exclusive female enterprise at least until the New Kingdom. Since linen was the basic cloth of the country, the monopoly on the linen industry held by women is significant.

As to women in the priesthood, evidence exists from the Old Kingdom onward that women had some part to play in temple ritual. During the Old Kingdom, women were most closely associated with the cult of Hathor. One such Hathor priestess, Intekes, is represented in the exhibition by a seated limestone statue lent by the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology of the University of California at Berkeley. The exhibition also includes several ritual objects and implements associated with Hathor and other goddesses and used in temple rites.

By the New Kingdom, the priesthood had become an isolated and professional class and higher priestly titles were rarely given to women. However, the magnificent uninscribed Late Period statue of a woman from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in this section of the exhibition may be that of a priestess or temple musician. The important New Kingdom-Late Period female priestly title of God's Wife of Amun, usually held by female members of the royal family, is treated in the section on "Female Royalty," where it is dramatically represented by a Third Intermediate Period bust of Amunirdes I from the Joslyn Art Museum (Omaha).

FEMALE ROYALTY

Ancient Egypt was organized around the king as earthly ruler and

intermediary between humanity and the divine. Royal women and their roles were generally defined in relation to the pharaoh, the ancient titles we translate as "queen" being "king's mother," "king's wife" and "king's principal wife." When queens did exercise sovereign power in Egypt, it was generally as regent for a king too young to rule. In general, a queen's power depended to a certain extent on her strength of character and on her era's beliefs about royalty, these beliefs being of great religious importance. The exhibition includes two superb Middle Kingdom images of royal women in more-than-human roles: Brooklyn's famous green head of a queen or princess (fig. 1) and Jack Josephson's quartzite head of a queen or princess, both originally from statues showing these women as sphinxes. From earlier in the Middle Kingdom are a number of reliefs from the tomb of Queen Nefru, wife of Mentuhotep II, including one, loaned anonymously, showing musicians clapping hands (fig. 2).

Several of Egypt's most powerful queens are also represented in the exhibition. Hatshepsut, who actually ruled as king during Dynasty XVIII, appears in the form of a kneeling statue from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Queen Tiye is present in the form of a head from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Nefertiti is represented in reliefs, including Brooklyn's Wilbour Plaque. The Harer Family Trust has loaned a rare statue of one of Ramesses II's queens, possibly Nefertari, holding a divine standard, a statue type normally reserved for men.

GODDESSES

In a few creation myths the creator was female, or the original creative powers were seen as pairs of male and female entities. Usually, however, the creator was a god even if he embodied male and female potential. The differentiation into male and female began with the deities who sprang

from the creator and were constituent parts of the cosmos. Some were major powers representing universal or cosmic phenomena, such as the sky (female and often associated with several goddesses). A few goddesses, such as Maat (universal order), and Seshat (patroness of writing and measurement) personified or presided over abstract concepts. The exhibition includes a lovely seated bronze figure of Maat, crowned with the feather that is her symbol, from the Museum of Art of the Rhode Island School of Design (Providence).

Goddesses were far more often protective and nurturing wives and mothers of gods. In fact, a single goddess could be the daughter, wife and mother of a god, even the creator. Yet individual goddesses might be more associated with a particular role. Hathor, for example, has a stronger connection to female sexuality and excitement ("biological motherhood") than Isis, epitome of the protective wife and mother ("social motherhood") or Mut, who was a sort of heavenly regent. A standing figure of a winged Isis protecting Osiris (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore) is one of the several representations of these deities in the exhibition.

The ambivalent attitude of male-centered Egyptian society toward the female is demonstrated clearly by these goddesses and others identified with the Eye of Re, daughter of the solar creator and the ordered universe's first female being. Protectresses of the divine order, Egypt and the kingship, these goddesses had to be kept pacified lest they turn their fierce energies against the things they should protect. The aggressive and controlled aspects of the goddess are sometimes represented, respectively, by the leonine form, as in the Cincinnati Art Museum's bust of Sakhmet, and the feline form, as in the Detroit Institute of Art's

magnificent bronze statue of a cat.

WOMEN IN THE AFTERLIFE

Women and men in Egypt shared similar beliefs and expectations about the afterlife. Even if women were most often buried in the tombs of their husbands or male relatives, they occasionally had their own tombs, as did the Fourth Dynasty's Lady Nofret, source of a lovely stela in the exhibition loaned by the Phoebe Hearst Museum. Women could also own the same types of funerary equipment as men, as illustrated by the richly decorated coffin of Henut-wedjebu from the Washington University Art Gallery (St. Louis) or the reserve head from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The exhibition's section on female royalty includes the unusual Dynasty IV statue of Queen Hetepheres II and her daughter Meresankh III from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. However, women in funerary statuary are usually shown with male members of their families, as in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's statue of Yuni and his wife Renenutet. The back of this statue is decorated with superb scenes of offering, including one showing that both daughters and sons discharged funerary cult obligations for their parents.

Richard A. Fazzini

Chairman of Egyptian, Classical and Ancient Middle Eastern Art
The Brooklyn Museum of Art

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temples of the low desert, to the imposing limestone escarpment. We knew that above these cliffs lay the High Desert plateau, with its distant oases and impenetrable seas of sand. A closer inspection revealed a number of white ribbons etched into the tawny limestone, tanned by ages of exposure to the almost perpetual sun of Egyptian days. These ribbons are paths worn as grooves in the surface of the rock. They appear white because they have not yet acquired the full Theban "patina" that characterizes the surrounding stone. Some of these tracks appear on maps, although the maps often disagree markedly. Most were unrecorded. Our interest was kindled.

One Sunday (our day off from work at Chicago House), we decided to climb the Theban escarpment by following a track known as the Farshût Road, leading from behind Carter House at the mouth of the Wadyein, of which the Valley of the Kings is a branch. The route crosses the High Desert of the Qena Bend of the Nile, and reenters the valley in the vicinity of Hou, ancient Hou(t)-Sekhem. We were curious to see what sort of pottery or other evidence of ancient activity we might encounter, since we had previously followed a disused branch of this path and were surprised to see not only the ubiquitous Coptic sherds, but also two separate "drops" of early New Kingdom bowls. We wondered who travelled on that ancient path, when and why.

An ancient Egyptian could refer to leaving and returning to the land of Egypt by using the terms "going up" and "going down," for Egypt was the Nile Valley, and not the desert. Indeed, the High Desert plateau is quite another world: serene, magnificent, empty, either terrifying or utterly captivating, depending on one's point of view. We subscribe to the lat-

IT BEGAN TO LOOK AS IF WE HAD OPENED A DOOR TO A NEW AND UNTAPPED SOURCE OF EGYPTOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

ter opinion. What meets the eye upon reaching the top of the escarpment is a vast, somewhat featureless, undulating limestone surface which ranges in color from gray to yellow to reddish-brown to blinding white, depending on the light at different times of day. It is covered in spots by dark brown flint, elsewhere by golden dunes.

When we arrived at the top of the escarpment, following the Farshût Road, we found—to our surprise—not only a thick carpet of pharaonic pottery, but dressed sandstone blocks and the fragments of a pharaonic stela. It began to look as though we had opened a door to a new and untapped source of Egyptological knowledge. We began official work at the site, and soon we discovered a fragment of a sandstone doorjamb, on which appeared the cartouches of a Sobekemsaf and an Antef, rulers from the time between the collapse of the Middle Kingdom and the rise of the New Kingdom. The worked blocks of sandstone we saw that first day, along with this fragmentary jamb, were parts of a small temple at the Theban end of the Farshût Road. One of the many pieces of sandstone belonging to the temple, a portion from the thickness of a doorway, bore a rough graffito of the Horus name of Nubkheperre-Antef V, strongly suggesting that the Antef of our fragmentary jamb was Antef V, the first ruler of the Theban Seventeenth Dynasty, the foes and finally conquerors of the Hyksos invaders. The fragmentary inscription on the jamb allows two interpretations, and grammatically the more attractive of the

two is a filiation, stating that Antef V was the son of a king Sobekemsaf. As no other name of the father is given, one may offer Sobekemsaf I as the most likely candidate, and in fact Sobekemsaf I is more widely attested than Sobekemsaf II. The inscription on the doorjamb thus suggests that Sobekemsaf I was the final ruler of the Thirteenth Dynasty, and the father of the founder of the Seventeenth Dynasty. This in turn explains the conflicting art historical information derived from the depictions of Sobekemsaf I—he essentially bridges the Thirteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties, and in a sense belongs to both. A further fragment of the doorway bears a portion of the divine epithet "Foremost of the Westerners," evidence that the temple was dedicated to the Abydene Osiris. One of the northern branches of the Farshût Road leads to Abydos, and here at the Theban end of the road once stood a Seventeenth Dynasty temple as a home for the Osiris of Abydos. As we shall see below, we have found further evidence of road connections between Thebes and Abydos.

At the site of Antef's temple, an area of the Libyan range we have dubbed Gebel Antef, we have also documented a number of associated votive objects, including a portion of a Thirteenth Dynasty naos, and a fragmentary Seventeenth Dynasty statue of a man with the rare court military title "king's son of the victorious ruler." Abundant pottery from the late Second Intermediate Period to early New Kingdom provides additional evidence of Theban interest in the desert during this time. Since our first exciting season, our discoveries—and the amount of material with which we have to deal—have continued to mount with alarming rapidity.

Associated with other caravan tracks in the Alamat Tal, north of the Theban promontory, we have found a cleared and built road, more than one

kilometer in length, that leads to the remains of two mud brick towers with dry stone glacis at the bases. We have been able to date these towers and their approach road to the late Second Intermediate Period/early Eighteenth Dynasty. Near the northern tower we have discovered pieces of Classic Kerma pottery, suggesting that the famous Nubian Medjoy desert policemen may have manned these towers. At all points on the main Farshût Road we have found abundant remains of pottery made from the distinctive wares of the Western Desert oases, confirming the location of a textually attested Theban route to the oases. At Gebel Qarn el-Gir, on the main Farshût Road, we have also identified a major caravan stop, with a vast pottery deposit several meters deep. On the Darb Rayayna to the south, we have identified the substantial remains of an Old Kingdom solar altar. Details of our first four seasons may be found in the past four annual reports of the Oriental Institute ("The Luxor-Farshût Desert Road Survey," The Oriental Institute 1992-1993 Annual Report, pp. 48-55; "The Luxor-Farshût Desert Road Survey," The Oriental Institute 1993-1994 Annual Report, pp. 40-48; "The Luxor-Farshût Desert Road Survey," The Oriental Institute 1994-1995 Annual Report, pp. 44-54; "The Theban Desert Road Survey," The Oriental Institute 1995-1996 Annual Report, pp. 62-70).

In addition to the ceramic remains on these ancient routes (for preliminary discussions, see our reports in *Bulletin de liaison du Groupe international d'étude de la céramique égyptienne* 18 (1994), pp. 45-49, and 19 (1996), pp. 36-50), and the inscribed monuments of Gebel Antef on the Farshût Road, we have two extensive pharaonic rock inscription sites within our concession. One of these sites, the Wadi el-Hôl, located in the middle of the main Luxor-Farshût Road,



EXAMINING POTTERY ON THE ALAMAT TAL ROAD

was discovered by the Mond/Myers Armant Expedition and partially photographed in the 1930's, but the only pharaonic document to be published was the monumental stela of Sobekhotep III of the Thirteenth Dynasty. Plans for work had to be abandoned due to the death of patron Robert Mond and the subsequent eruption of the Second World War. The Theban Desert Road Survey is thus the first attempt at a comprehensive documentation of the hundreds of rock inscriptions at this site. Following the Alamat Tal caravan tracks far beyond the Second Intermediate Period/early New Kingdom towers, on February 12, 1995, we discovered an extensive and previously unknown group of rock inscriptions, including a large number of unique and significant texts and scenes. No one had suspected the existence of this site, which we have named Gebel Tjauti.

The scenes and inscriptions in the Wadi el-Hôl range in date from the predynastic period to early Islamic times, but the majority of texts, and many of the depictions as well, are of late Middle Kingdom/Second Intermediate Period date. At Gebel Tjauti the depictions and texts date from the predynastic period through the Coptic period, with two major clusters—the First Intermediate

Period, and the late Middle Kingdom/Second Intermediate Period. The preponderance of material at both sites originating during one or the other of the first two so-called intermediate periods suggests that when there was political and military trouble in the Nile Valley, activity in the Western Desert appears to have increased. The inscriptions and depictions from both of our major graffiti sites throw light on many subjects.

At both sites there is evidence of religious activity deep in the desert. Several inscriptions in the Wadi el-Hôl are dated to the reign of Amenemhat III, and one is the memorial of Dedusobek who says that he is on his way from Abydos to participate in rites for the deceased Eleventh Dynasty ruler (Nebhepetre) Monthuhotep. The temple of Monthuhotep at Deir el-Bahri, at the Theban end of the road on which Dedusobek travelled, was likely the Abydene priest's goal. Along with the temple of Abydene Osiris at Gebel Antef, we have now explicit evidence for the use of the Farshût Road as a pilgrimage route. The graffito of Dedusobek and the epithet of Osiris on the door jamb fragment, along with other bits of information, allow speculation on the purpose of our Gebel Antef temple.

The ceramic remains of Gebel Antef also give one an idea of some of the practices that went on at the temple. We know that the spirit of Osiris, guided by the goddess Hathor, was thought to journey from Abydos to Thebes in order to celebrate the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. One of the rites attested for the Theban necropolis is the lighting of torches to aid in guiding Osiris and the souls of the blessed dead. On Gebel Antef, one of the common types of Late Period pottery from the area is a disk-based vessel, attested in use as a brazier. Torches appear to have been lit for Osiris at his temple at the Theban end of the Farshût Road, a route Osiris might well have followed on his way from the cemetery land of Abydos.

A number of inscriptions and finds from the main sites illustrate the veneration of the goddess Hathor. Hathor, who as the red light before sunrise represents the maternal womb of the sun of day, also represents the sun disk as the eye of the supreme deity, and as such is the daughter of the solar deity. Just as the sun sinks lower into the southern sky as winter progresses, so Hathor left Egypt in anger, to wander the deserts and savannahs of the far southeast as the roaring and bloodthirsty lioness Sakhmet. Deities such as Thoth and Onuris are believed to lure her back to Egypt and her father each year, where she must be enticed and placated by drinking and dancing, until she returns to the state of the benevolent Hathor, and the languorous and beneficial cat Bastet. Our findings in the Wadi el-Hôl include a number of unique texts referring to people "spending the day beneath this gebel on holiday." The vocabulary suggests the worship of the goddess Hathor. One man who left his signature in the Wadi el-Hôl was a singer, and we have a unique graffito of a man in Egyptian dress playing an asymmetrical lyre, his head thrown back and

OUR INSCRIPTIONS OFTEN BRING TO ONE'S EARS THE CLASHING SOUNDS OF ANCIENT MARTIAL VICTORY

mouth open as though singing. From a Ptolemaic inscription from Hou, at the northwestern end of the road, we know of a desert procession in the area. All of this, together with references from a wide assortment of other texts, suggests a religious revelry in the desert, a veneration of the goddess Hathor at the remote desert caravan stop.

Hathor also appears at Gebel Tjauti, in the form of a cow before whom stands a footed bowl containing greenery. The pottery at the site includes a number of "fancy" types such as large, red-burnished *hes*-vessels and blue-painted jars with Hathor head appliques. Along with these suggestions of religious importance is another fragmentary and isolated find that strongly recalls a passage from a Roman period religious text. On a path overlooking the main caravan tracks heading out towards Gebel Tjauti we found a small blue faience cup. We know that people spent the day on holiday in the Wadi el-Hôl, and one may see in this cup testimony to the rite of "going out upon the desert" to celebrate and welcome back the returning goddess of the eye of the sun (P. Leiden T32 col. 3, l. 15), and a passage of text on the Ptolemaic gate into the enclosure of the Mut Temple at Karnak:

"Faience is poured out for her upon [her] path at the commencement of the time of her departure from the Per-Neser."

The gebel did not always echo the chants of priests and ring with the ecstatic shouts of revelers welcoming Hathor. Our inscriptions often bring to one's ears the clashing sounds of ancient martial glory. In the Wadi el-

Hôl we have many signatures of soldiers and guards from the time of the Thirteenth Dynasty, when pharaonic authority was declining, and a wave of Asiatics was breaking over the Delta. The Thirteenth Dynasty came to an end when Memphis fell to the warlike Hyksos, who conquered much of Egypt. Only the local kings of the early Seventeenth Dynasty at Thebes maintained in a diminished way the pharaonic dignity. In March 1995, we discovered a long, five-line-hieratic inscription in the Wadi el-Hôl which suddenly illuminated, at least dimly, that bleak period. The inscription is a text quoting from an unknown literary composition describing the military exploits of a Theban king of the Second Intermediate Period who drives back foreign hordes in the gebel, and who goes sleepless and hungry in the desert, fighting off foreigners and Egyptian collaborators.

The text is patterned after the first strophe in Sinuhe's encomium on Sesostri I from the well-known Middle Egyptian Story of Sinuhe. The author of our inscription well demonstrates his erudition, and alludes to several Middle Kingdom literary texts, including the Instructions for Merikare, the Complaints of Kakheperresoneb, and texts praising Sesostri I. The text proper begins:

"Oh people great and small, and the [army] in its entirety—behold, a s-man is in the city, whose [like] has not been known!"

This is an allusion to the Prophecy of Neferti, in which, after bemoaning the sad fate of Egypt, including Asiatic hordes in the north, Neferti prophecies that a *s-man* of the south will come to set things aright—our text says that indeed a *s-man* is even now in the City (*nîw.t* as Thebes, like *urbs* for Rome). The text goes on to relate how "foreigners fall to his pronouncements, the one who slays as he



VIEW ALONG THE FARSHÛT ROAD,
DESCENDING FROM THE HIGH PLATEAU AT THE WADI EL-HÔL

desires while trampling the gebel" and "his tongue alone curbs the Asiatics(?);" "he does not love the people who are loyal to that enemy of his." The people whom the man in Thebes does not love are called *rmt*, a term meaning humans and usually reserved as a reference to the Egyptians themselves, the *gens*. Apparently the man in Thebes is battling both foreigners and collaborators amongst the Egyptians themselves. In conclusion the text says that the Theban man is:

"haughty because of what has happened, he spending the night hungry until day breaks, and he sees heaven like a flame. His joy is the completion of the watch."

"What has happened" appears pregnantly in a number of pessimistic works of the Middle Kingdom describing the sorry state of the land. But the Theban ruler is undaunted; he is even puffed up because of the dire straits of Egypt. He lives an austere and ascetic life in the gebel, but ultimately he sees the morning sky like a flame. This alludes to the newborn sun, the fiery child who rises from the cauldron-like bowels of the eastern horizon, the place of the final hellish destruction of the souls of the damned. The author of the Wadi el-Hôl text,

through religious imagery, shows the hungry and embattled ruler in the gebel, awake through the night, finally seeing the scorching disk of the sun, a herald of the new day of Theban conquest, a sign that Re will soon consume

Thebes' enemies with unquenchable fire.

The roads show well their great military importance. At Gebel Tjauti, the site behind the Second Intermediate Period towers, we have copied a large tableau dated to the reign of King Sekhen/Ka, a predecessor of Narmer during the so-called Dynasty 0. It depicts an Egyptian carrying a spear in one hand, and leading a bound foreigner by a rope in his other hand. The captive has long, wild hair, with a feather atop his head. On the basis of later Egyptian iconography this suggests a Libyan, and the Sekhen tableau is indeed located on a road leading into the Western Desert.

The most imposing, and perhaps the most important text is a formal inscription of the Coptite monarch Tjauti, apparently the last Heracleopolitan ruler of the nome north of Thebes before the Thebans took Coptos at the beginning of the final phase of the wars of reunification at the end of the First Intermediate Period. Tjauti's monument is a unique road construction text of the pharaonic period, and the nomarch claims "I have made this [the road] for crossing this gebel, which the ruler of another nome (presumably Antef of Thebes) had closed off [when he came in order to]

fight with my name," a reference to the beginning of the Theban expansion during the early Eleventh Dynasty. Tjauti claimed in one of his titles the control of the routes of the Thebaïd through the Western Desert; his Theban rival Antef claimed the title also, however, and Tjauti's inscription suggests that he had indeed lost control of the other roads (notably the main Farshût Road) to the Thebans.

This in turn had important implications for Theban military conduct and strategy. By controlling the desert routes heading northwest out of Thebes, a Theban army could bypass the fifth, sixth, and seventh nomes of Upper Egypt, and attack the Eighth Nome directly. As a result of one decisive battle, Thebes could gain control of the eight southernmost nomes of Upper Egypt. When Tjauti says the Thebans had sealed off the gebel, we should understand that they were preparing to attack the Eighth Nome. Tjauti, desperately trying to maintain a lifeline to the Heracleopolitan realm, improved a preexisting route. This bold action of Tjauti may have set in motion the final events which ultimately led to the creation of the Middle Kingdom. The Thebans could not allow Tjauti and the Heracleopolitans to control a route north of their tracks, a road on which an enemy army could operate on interior lines. We are fortunate to know what happened, for near the stela of Tjauti we found boldly scratched onto the limestone the words "the assault troops [*ms< hwi*, "troops of smiting," a rare term attested in a contemporary document from Edfu] of the Son of Re Antef." These were apparently picked troops of Antef I who captured the last Heracleopolitan road in Upper Egypt, perhaps on their way to the capture of the holy city of Abydos. We know that by early in the reign of Antef II the northern border of the Thebaïd lay between Abydos and

Thinis, so apparently Antef I did indeed turn the flanks of the nomes around the Qena Bend. On the basis of several contemporary private stela, and historical references in the Instruction for Merikare, Antef II, after an initially unsuccessful attack on Thinis, outflanked Thinis, moved into the Tenth Upper Egyptian Nome, and then returned to mop up the Thinite resistance. Putting all of this together, and depending heavily on the new inscriptions from Gebel Tjauti, we can now say that the first move of the Thebans as they began their northward expansion was the capture of the routes across the Qena Bend. In conjunction with what we know from the reign of Antef II, we can also say that the Thebans of the First Intermediate Period understood and employed the strategy which Liddell Hart termed the "indirect approach," a refusal to meet the main force of the enemy, a style of warfare characterized by flanking manoeuvres of small forces and constant attempts to unbalance a perhaps numerically superior enemy.

Considering the importance of the Wadi el-Hôl during the Second Intermediate Period, we may suggest that the Thebans never forgot the lessons they learned when they fought the Coptite monarch Tjauti for control of the roads across the Qena Bend.

Not only armies might want to cut across the desert bend quickly. Atop Gebel Antef we discovered a fragmentary Third Intermediate Period stela. We later found in the archives of the EES an unpublished photo of a mate to the monument: a portion of a stela which had been brought to Oliver Myers from the gebel near the Wadi el-Hôl in the 1930's. Comparing the equally fragmentary texts of our stela and the now lost mate, we know that the Farshût Road was called the "Road of Horses." Nubian desert cavalry are known from Egyptian sources, and in the Wadi el-Hôl itself we have a depiction of a man riding a horse. One immediately thinks of couriers carrying letters, and there is in fact a letter from the mayor of Thebes to a farmer

at Hou, at the opposite end of the Farshût Road. The mayor says that the farmer should prepare several things for the visit of the mayor and king Amenhotep II in three days. The modern editor of the letter recognized that the specified time suggests that the royal entourage will arrive by boat, but that the letter, in order to arrive with sufficient time to spare for the farmer to fulfill his appointed tasks, must have gone by courier across the desert. The editor suggested the Farshût Road might have been used, and

now we can say it almost certainly was a "pony express" road. The Roman traveller Diodorus Siculus reports seeing the remnants of a postal road that ran between Memphis and Thebes, entering Thebes in the Libyan mountains. Diodorus appears to describe the Farshût Road. Our most recent discovery atop the high desert lends further credibility to this idea (see below).

We are now rapidly running out of space, and have as yet to mention many interesting, unique, even astonishing texts. There are two Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions in the Wadi el-Hôl, the westernmost occurrences of this script thus far documented. We have copied a letter which provides a parallel for the opening of Sinuhe's letter to Sesostri I, and supports several variant readings of the Ashmoleon ostrakon. There is a depiction of a royal statue on a sledge, with an accompanying text. A Coptic inscription from the Wadi el-Hôl provides a rare Coptic attestation (only about three others are thus far known) of the Graeco-Roman economic title *apaitetes*. At Gebel Tjauti the name of Pepy I provides evidence for Sixth Dynasty use of the road, and suggests a connection with the Interpreters of Yam attested for the same period at nearby Naqada. Also at Gebel Tjauti are numerous graffiti left by Middle Kingdom policemen, including several written by a man known to have served during the reign of Sobekhotep III. A red ink inscription of the Middle Kingdom refers to a royal visit to Thebes, apparently along the Alamat Tal Road. Another inscription gives the date in a regnal year eleven of the observation of the heliacal rising of Sothis; although the king's name is absent, by extrapolating the month date forward from the Sesostri III Sothic date and correcting for a Theban observation point, we know that the inscription was made during

the Seventeenth Dynasty, and will help in ordering the kings of that important but shadowy dynasty. We have recorded a New Kingdom graffiti to representing the Canaanite god Resheph. There are also numerous Coptic graffiti at Gebel Tjauti, including several in cryptography.

The inscriptions from Gebel Tjauti and the Wadi el-Hôl are of great significance. Rivalling in importance the vast and well known graffiti concentrations of the Eastern Desert, these texts and depictions appear to excel others in the eclectic nature of their contents, and suggest a much more energetic pharaonic use of the Western Desert than had ever been suspected by Egyptologists. These rock inscriptions offer evidence of a wide range of pharaonic activity far beyond the borders of the Nile Valley: the daily travels of civilians, the routine patrols of desert policemen, royal journeys and military actions, holiday celebrations and astronomical observation. They shed light on the obscure and exciting Intermediate Periods of Egyptian history.

These inscriptions are, however, in great danger. We observed and reported vandalism at the Wadi el-Hôl at the time of our initial work at that site in March 1994. In January 1995 we found thieves in the act of desecrating the site. After we disabled their tractor and chased them into the desert, they were arrested, released on bail, and have since continued their destruction of the inscriptions. When we returned again early in March 1995, they had destroyed most of the Sobekhotep III stela, and wantonly damaged many more graffiti. We have little hope that the site can be properly patrolled and protected. All other high desert sites are equally vulnerable. Identifying and recording these sites and their remains are the only means of saving for posterity this formerly untapped source of historical information.

By virtue of our employment in Egypt for seven months each year, we have been able to engage in salvage epigraphy at these remote sites in our free time, at first using only our very limited personal resources to cover expenses. For the past two seasons, support for our epigraphic work on the desert roads has been provided by the American Research Center in Egypt through a grant from the United States Information Agency. A grant from the Michela Schiff Giorgini Foundation has made it possible for us to undertake this season the comprehensive photographic documentation of all inscriptions at both sites. To both organizations we are extremely grateful. The faint and often crumbling texts and scenes cannot be copied quickly, but rather require careful study so that the maximum amount of information may be recorded. Thus, we have devoted our time and skills to producing the most accurate copies possible: to date, we have copied over 300 graffiti at the main Wadi el-Hôl and Gebel Tjauti rock inscription sites (this does not include the material we have copied at other Coptic sites).

The desert reveals new secrets to us nearly every time we venture into it. Just a few weeks before the final version of this article was submitted, we encountered yet another astonishing mass of evidence of ancient activity, smack in the middle of the desert of the Qena Bend. Atop the high plateau, about 30 minutes climb from the Wadi el-Hôl, is an extensive stratified deposit of pottery, animal dung, mud bricks, fired bricks, and even sandstone. The site is quite vast, more than 3,000 m² in area. We are hopeful that an enormous amount of information may be gained from systematic study of this site; it will likely complement what we already know from other sites along the Farshût Road, such as Gebel Antef, the Wadi el-Hôl, and Gebel Qarn el-Gir, concerning about the energetic use of the

road throughout history. Already, a cursory look at the stratification revealed by the digging of vandals has produced unexpected and tantalizing evidence in the form of a bronze arrowhead which has parallels firmly dated to the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties. Most surprising is the presence of a name carved on a natural boulder nearby—this means that we must now consider every rock in the desert a potential source of inscribed information! The fellow who commemorated his presence atop the gebel is a well-known personage: the Second Priest of Amun, Roma^c. This is Roma^c-Roy, owner of Theban Tomb 283, who later was promoted to High Priest of Amun by Ramesses II, because the granaries and treasury of Amun were overseen especially well by him. As there were fields belonging to the domain of Amun at Hou, we can say with confidence that Roma^c deserved his career advancements, since he seems to have undertaken the journey across the desert in order to inspect Amun's holdings himself.

We could scarcely have known years ago when we first began to follow those ribbons worn into the gebel what amazing discoveries awaited us. The desert west of the Nile is truly an unexplored world from an Egyptological standpoint; each bit of evidence we encounter adds enormously to the picture beginning to form of a vigorous ancient presence in this harsh terrain. We hope in future years to be able to expand our investigations of this exciting new area of study. ♀

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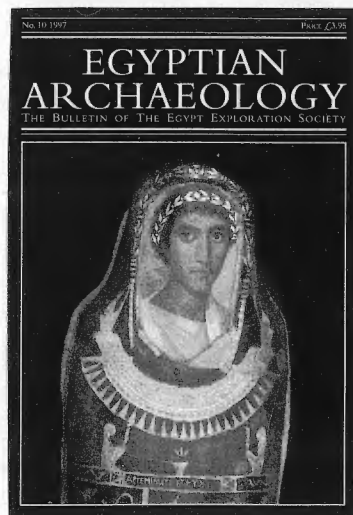
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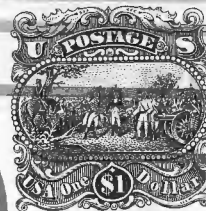
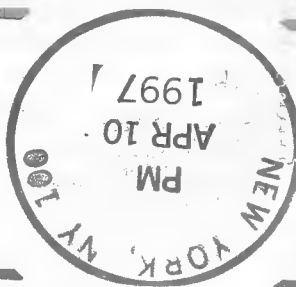
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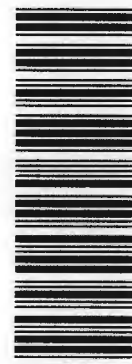
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EXHIBITIONS

BOSTON

Facing Eternity: Mummy Masks from Ancient Egypt. Sarcophagus masks, wood and cartonnage from Old Kingdom through Roman Period. Ongoing. The Museum of Fine Arts, 617-267-9300.

BROOKLYN

Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt. 250 works of art from 25 American museums and collectors. Feb. 21-May 18, Brooklyn Museum of Art, 718-638-5000.

DETROIT

Over 200 works from pre-Dynastic through Roman period. From Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum, Hildesheim Germany. July 16, 1997-January 4, 1998. Detroit Institute of Art. 313-833-7900.

PHILADELPHIA

The Egyptian Mummy. Egyptian ideas about life after death, also health and disease as revealed by x-ray and autopsy studies of mummified remains. Ongoing. University of Penn. Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 215-898-4000.

WASHINGTON, DC

Ancient Egyptian Glass. Fifteen colored glass vessels of the 18th Dynasty from the Charles Lang Freer Collection. Ongoing. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 202-357-4880.

Looping and Knitting, A History. Objects include the earliest of knitting excavated in Egypt, 12-15th centuries. Feb. 7-July 27, 1997. The Textile Museum, 202-667-0441.

LECTURES

The Friends of Egyptian Art. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 617-369-3329. All lectures at 7:30 p.m.

THE BOSTON-PENN EXCAVATIONS AT SAQQARA: RECENT WORK.

Rita Freed, Jean-Louis Lachèvre, April 9.
AMARNA: CITY AND COSMOS.
Michael Malinson, May 9.

MISTRESS OF THE HOUSE, MISTRESS OF HEAVEN: WOMEN IN ANCIENT EGYPT. Lecture Series. All lectures at Brooklyn Museum of Art, 718-638-5000, ext. 230.
PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ART.

Edna R. Russmann, Research Assoc. Dept. of Egyptian, Classical, and Anc. Middle Eastern Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art, April 6, 2 p.m.

THE LEGAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Janet H. Johnson, Prof. of Egyptology, Oriental Inst. Univ. Of Chicago, April 20, 2 p.m.

CONFERENCES

TRAVELLERS IN EGYPT AND THE NEAR EAST July 9-12, 1997, St. Catherine's College, Oxford. Discussing the interaction between the various travellers before the start of the 20th century, as well as their opinion of the countries in which they travelled and the local people's opinions of the travellers they met. Contact Mrs. Deborah Manley, 57 Plantation Road, Oxford, England OX2 6JE (tel. 01865 310 284) for further info., contributions or suggestions for session topics: contact Mrs. Janet Starkey e-mail: j.c.m.starkey@durham.ac.uk with contributions or offers of papers as soon as possible.

MIDDLE EASTERN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES Early October, Yale University. Ten panels include: 1. climate change in the ancient and modern Middle East 2. Use of satellite imagery in studying Middle Eastern environments. Contact: Roger T. Kenna, doctoral cand. History Dept. E-mail: roger.kenna@yale.edu